

Echoes from the Greek Anthology

BY

J. G. LEGGE



1919



ECHOES FROM THE GREEK
ANTHOLOGY





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J. G. LEGGE



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TO J.

PREFACE

NO more consoling book was published during the war than the Poet Laureate's "Spirit of Man." Not all of the winged words and thoughts in it are modern, but the spirit revealed is the spirit of a modern world. The service he has rendered us, who are the heirs of all the ages, had, for the spirit of an antique world, already been performed by Mr. Mackail in his "Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology" with its illuminating introduction, prose translations, and notes. A man who read in undergraduate days the glowing chapter on the Anthology in Symonds' "Studies of the Greek Poets" is never likely to forget the thrill that panegyric on Meleager gave him. But Mr. Mackail's book does more for us. There we have the courage, the dignity, the noble thought, the passion, the beauty, the gaiety and gloom that marked the spirit of ancient Greece, the spirit of a non-Christian, a slave-holding, era, yet tinged in its latest manifestations with a philosophy that came from Judaea, and was the gift of a race that produced a poetry even more sublime than that of Greece. A study of the "Spirit of

PREFACE

Man" and the "Select Epigrams" side by side shows loss and gain—more gain than loss; shows differences in degree that amount to differences in kind; nevertheless, so constant is the human element that, with a start, the student realizes again and again how across the centuries hand reaches out to hand.

This little book, no bigger for a book than an epigram for a poem, is an attempt to popularize in English verse a selection from the Epigrams chosen by Mr. Mackail to illustrate the lovely language in which the lights and shadows of Greek thought revealed themselves. How much it owes to him, not only in arrangement, but also for what faithfulness the versions have to their exquisite originals, and, not seldom, for the appropriate word or phrase, every one who knows his book will recognize. Only one or two epigrams have been added which are not to be found in Mr. Mackail's selection. They have been taken from Mr. W. R. Paton's edition of the bulk of the Anthology, a real treasure which we owe to the Loeb Classics. To Mr. Paton are also due thanks for a hint here and there to the translator. Greek is a beautiful language, but my hope is that in the effort to keep within the Greek compass, to give value for word, I have not, by use of an English more terse perhaps than is now common, unduly strained our own, the most beautiful of all languages.

The preparation of the book has afforded a grateful respite

PREFACE

from the worries and anxieties of these present times. Most of the verses have been turned on the top of a municipal tram, or in railway carriages on tedious war-time journeys. They may bring consolation to some who glance at them, for Art is like a shrine lit for ever by the quenchless spirit of man. It was not for Greece alone and for his time only, but for us also, and to-day, that Simonides wrote his lines on the Spartan dead at Plataea:

To their dear land a fadeless wreath they gave,
These men now wrapped by death in cloudy night;
Who, being dead, yet live, since from the grave
Valour divine doth lead them to the light.

J. G. LEGGE.

SANDON STUDIOS SOCIETY,
LIVERPOOL.
12 January 1919.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE EPIGRAMMATIST TO HIS PUBLIC	13
LOVE	14
THE HEROIC DEAD AND OTHER EPITAPHS	22
NATURE AND ART	29
THE HUMAN AND DIVINE	37
THE COMIC MUSE	46
LIFE AND DEATH	51
INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY	55
EPILOGUE	57
INDEX OF AUTHORS	59

ECHOES FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY

I

RHINTHO THE EPIGRAMMATIST

TO HIS PUBLIC

Nossis

WITH laughter ringing, and a friendly word,
Greet, as you pass, Rhintho of Syracuse;
Ivy I plucked—my own! A small song-bird
Humbly I served my tragi-comic Muse.

LOVE

II

IN PRAISE OF LOVE

Asclepiades

To summer thirst how sweet a draught ice-cold,
To frost-bound sailors sweet the crown of spring;
But sweeter far when but one mantle's fold
Hides lovers twain, and love's sole praise they sing.

III

LOVE'S VICTIM

Meleager

FOR ever in mine ears Love's echo rings,
My silent eyes drop tears of sweet desire;
And long ere night or day soft slumber brings
My heart enchanted bears the print of fire.
Ah, cherubs, well ye know with tireless wings
To find me, but to leave how soon ye tire!

IV
ON HELIODORE

Meleager

I

WHY, flower-fed bee, touch Heliodore's fair skin,
Leaving for her the sweet flower-bells of spring?
What means to love-sick hearts your busy din?
That bitter love has sweetness in his sting?
I think so! Back, fond fool, back to your kin,
For long ago we learnt the news you bring.

2

The sweet-voiced Heliodore within my heart,
Soul of my soul, Love moulds with subtle art.

3

Though fades the wreath round Heliodore's fair head,
She, garland of her garland, glows instead.

4

She's gone! What savage land the monster bore
Could ravish her, and dare Love's angry dart?
Light torches, quick! A footfall? Heliodore!
Back to my breast again, O startled heart!

5

Oh still my passion, Love, for Heliodore
That will not rest; regard my suppliant strain;
Or by thy bow, whose wingéd shafts ignore
The breasts of others, but for mine are fain,
E'en though thou slay me I will write thy score:
"Look, passer by, on him whom Love has slain."

ON HELIODORE

6

Pour, and again, again, cry "Helidore";
With wine unwatered mix her honeyed name,
And fetch the myrrh-drenched wreath last night I wore,
That I may dream I hold her still the same.
For see, the lovers' rose is weeping sore
To find her gone whom once this breast could claim.

7

O night, wild wakeful dreams of Heliodore!
Salt tears at dawn that soothe the slow gray hour!
Of love for me keeps she a little store,
On my cold picture warm her lips' red flower?
Has she a tear for one who kissed her oft?
Clasps she in dreams a counterfeit of me?
Or toys she with another? Smile not soft,
O lamp, on him; I trusted her to thee.

8

Tears on the earth between us, Heliodore,
Love's gift I give, the last to reach the dead.
Tears, bitter tears! Love's chalice holds no more
On thy dank tomb for passion's sake to shed.
Sorely I wail thee, sorely, 'mid the shades:
Acheron wins thee now, an idle boon.
Ah, where's my cherished flower? In dust she fades,
For Death has nipt her, nipt my rose so soon!
O Mother Earth, who all things nurtarest,
Tenderly clasp my lost one to thy breast.

IX
WHO CAN OUTFRAN LOVE?

Paulus Silentiarius

E'EN though thou range past Meroë forlorn,
Love on his strenuous wings will waft me there;
E'en though thou seek thy rosy rival, Morn,
Eastward a thousand leagues on foot I'll fare.

X
THE FLOWER THAT FADES

Rufinus

I SEND thee, Rhodocleia, this wreath for dower,
Of fairest blooms by mine own fingers made;
Lily, and chaliced rose, and moist wind-flower,
Narcissus soft and violet dark I braid;
Wear them, and vaunt no more thy beauty's power,
For, like this wreath, thou too must flower and fade.

XI

HOW SAY FAREWELL?

Paulus Silentiarius

“FAREWELL” I fain would say, but on the brink
Of speech hold back, and cannot leave thy side;
Still from the bitter parting must I shrink,
As from the night on Acheron’s dark tide.

Thy light is as the day’s, but yet the day
Is voiceless, surely, while thou hast a tongue
Sweeter than Siren’s, that the word can say
Whereon my soul with all its hopes is hung.

XII

THE KISS

Strato

LAST evening, at the hour of sweet good-night,
Moeris, she kissed me—really or in a dream?
The tales she told I still recall aright;
Her questions too, how vivid still they seem!
The kiss I doubt. Could I, poor mortal wight,
Still wander here, rapt by that heavenly beam?

V

ON RHODANTHE

Agathias

ALL night I sigh, and when for little space
 Gray dawn bestows her kindly gift of sleep,
 The twittering swallows haunt me; far they chase
 Soft slumber from mine eyes, and I must weep.

My swollen eyelids close not; evermore
 Rhodanthe's image in my mind doth float.
 Cease, envious chatters, 'twas not I who shore
 Philomel's tongue, and stilled her tuneful throat.

Weep ye for Itylus the hill-tops round,
 Sit wailing by the hoopoe's rocky nest,
 But let me doze; I'd dream that I slept sound,
 Clasped in Rhodanthe's arms close to her breast.

VI

TO ZENOPHILE

Meleager

THOU sleep'st, my little flower, Zenophile;
 Had I, a wingless sleep, come to thine eyes
 Ere he who drowsed e'en Zeus could visit thee,
 I'd hold thee mine, and share with none my prize.

VII
ON ALEXIS

Meleager

AT noon I saw Alexis passing by,
In summer heat the harvest just begun;
Twin rays of brightness smote me ardently,
Love's from his eyes, and others from the sun.

Night cools those others, but in dreams again
A phantom shape kindles more fierce desire;
To others sleep brings peace, to me but pain—
She moulds a form of beauty breathing fire.

VIII
TIRED OF LIFE

Asclepiades

NOT two and twenty yet, I'd live no more!
Why, Loves, so fierce? Why kindle me to flame?
What's left you when I'm gone? Just as before
To carry on with dice your heedless game!

XVIII

ON THE ATHENIAN DEAD AT CHALCIS

Simonides

NEATH Dirphys' fold we fell; a monument
Our people's hands hard by Euripus piled,
And justly; for what charm our youth had lent
We lost when o'er us swept war's tempest wild.

XIX

ON THE SLAIN IN A BATTLE IN THESSALY

Aeschylus

DARK too their fate who stood the spearman's thrust,
For their rich native pastures venturing all;
They died, their glory lives; of Ossa's dust
To hide their limbs they made a funeral pall.

XX.

ON THE DEAD IN AN UNKNOWN BATTLE

Mnasalcas

To free their country from the grievous yoke
These men through cloud of dust and darkness came.
Great praise their valour won. So for his folk
May each man dare to die who learns their fame!

XXI
ON A DEAD WARRIOR

Anacreon

VALIANT in fight was he who fills this grave;
But Ares spares the coward, not the brave.

XXII
ON TWO LOST AT SEA

(1)
ERASIPPUS' TOMB

Glaucus

STONE slab nor dust marks Erasippus' tomb,
The sea's the sepulchre that meets thine eye;
Where with his ship he sank to meet his doom,
Where waste his bones, learn of the sea-gulls' cry.

(2)
A CENOTAPH

Author Unknown

SEAFARER, ask me not whose tomb I be;
But may'st thou chance upon a kinder sea!

XIII
LOVE'S STAR

Plato

THOU gazest on the stars; 'tis heaven I'd be,
To gaze, my Star, with myriad eyes on thee !

XIV
ANY ROMEO TO HIS JULIET

Meleager

Go, Star of Dawn, but her who goes with thee
Soon, as Eve's Star, bring back in secrecy.

EPITAPHS

XV

ON THE ATHENIAN DEAD AT PLATAEA

Simonides

If noble death be valour's highest stake,
That lot to win 'tis we were fortune's choice;
We snatched at freedom's crown for Hellas' sake,
We fell, but in unaging fame rejoice.

XVI

ON THE SPARTAN DEAD AT PLATAEA

Simonides

To their dear land a fadeless wreath they gave,
These men now wrapped by death in cloudy night;
Who, being dead, yet live, since from the grave
Valour divine doth lead them to the light.

XVII

ON THE SPARTANS AT THERMOPYLAE

Simonides

Go, stranger, tell the Spartans, here we lie
Who know their precepts and obedient die.

XXIX

ON A SINGING-BIRD

Tymnes

O BIRD the Graces love, a singer thou
 To make with halcyon's art the world rejoice;
 Thou'rt gone! In silent paths night holds thee now
 Dear warbler, thy sweet self and throbbing voice.

XXX

ON AESCHYLUS

Aeschylus

EUPHORION's son, Athenian Aeschylus,
 Lies here; he died in Gela rich in corn;
 Marathon's grove acclaims him valorous,
 And witness too the long-haired Mede hath borne.

XXXI

ON SOPHOCLES

Simmiās

CREEP gently o'er the grave of Sophocles,
 O ivy, flinging light thy tresses green;
 Around blow petalled roses, and by these
 The clustered vine's soft tendrils crowd the scene
 All for his honeyed tongue, whose grace to please
 And muse to inspire blent eloquence serene.

XXXII
ON EURIPIDES

Thucydides

HIS monument is Hellas; Macedon
Inters his bones, he ended there his days;
Of Athens, heart of Hellas, he was son;
And those his muses thrilled intone his praise.

XXXIII
ON ARISTOPHANES

Plato

FOR refuge sure, that might the Graces please,
Was found the soul of Aristophanes.

XXXIV
ON ANACREON

Author Unknown

O THOU that passest by Anacreon's grave,
Since I drank wine, with wine my ashes lave.

XXXV
ON THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD

Plato

ONCE on the quick, Day Star, thy light was shed;
Eve's Star in death, thou shinest on the dead.

XXIII
ON A SINGING-GIRL

Author Unknown

IN this small grave a sweet-voiced nightingale,
The blue-eyed Musa, mute so suddenly,
Lies like a stone; art, fame, of none avail.
O Musa fair, light be this dust on thee.

XXIV
FRIEND TO FRIEND

Author Unknown

THOUGH small the stone, dear friend, I raise to thee,
Great was the love whose memory I bless;
I'll seek thee still; Death grant thee thought of me,
Nor draught of Lethe bring forgetfulness.

XXV
ON AN INFANT

Author Unknown

DEATH took me a babe, my life scarce tasted yet,
Whether for good or ill I do not know.
Why, greedy death, a babe so hard beset?
Why haste, when all at last thy way must go?

XXVI

ON A GIRL OF SIX

Leonidas of Tarentum

IN her seventh year she yielded up her breath,
Untimely, first of all her playmates, sped;
She grieved so for her baby brother's death,
Who drank, not two years old, the potion dread.
O hapless mother, thus man reckoneth
How near his feet the snares of Fate are spread.

XXVII

ON A WAYSIDE TOMB

Nicias

HERE by the poplars, weary traveller, stay;
Draw near our spring, to taste the cooling jet;
And call the fount to mind when far away,
That Simus by his dead child, Gillus, set.

XXVIII

ON A THESSALIAN HOUND

Simonides

THY bones, O huntress Lycas, here we hide,
White bones the wolf yet fears may hunt him down;
Thy fame still rings from Pelion's massy side
And lone Cithaeron's peaks and Ossa's crown.

XLI
THE DEAD DECOY

Simmias

No more thy ringing call the woods within,
O hunter partridge, through the green twilight
Lures from their forest haunts thy speckled kin :
To Acheron thou tak'st thy final flight.

XLII
THE TAME CRICKET

Aristodicus

SHRILL grasshopper, in Alcis' wealthy home
The sun no more thy chirping joy shall see ;
For thou art gone in Pluto's fields to roam
'Mid dewy flowers of gold Persephone.

XLIII
THE ANT

Antipater of Sidon

HERE by the threshing-floor, brave, toiling ant,
A thirsty clod we raise who mind thee well ;
So may Demeter's fertile furrow grant
In death repose within thy rustic cell.

XLIV
TO MEADOWS

Meleager

Now the white violet blooms, and dewy-eyed
Narcissus and the lily of the hills ;
And now Persuasion's rose, the spring-time's pride,
Zenophile in bloom her lover thrills.
Idle your laughing joy, ye meadows pied ;
My girl the air with sweeter fragrance fills.

XLV
A COUNTRY FEAST

Nicaenetus

Not in the town, my friend, in country free
I'll hold my feast, by the soft west wind fanned ;
Strewn osiers make the couch that pleaseth me,
Cut from some native willow-bed at hand.

Osiers the Carians' ancient crown ! Fetch wine,
And strike, to glad the Muses, harp-strings keen,
That we may praise in song Zeus' bride divine
And drink our fill, toasting our island queen.

NATURE AND ART

XXXVI

WOODLAND ECHOES

Author Unknown

HITHER and rest beneath my pine-tree near,
For honey-sweet its murmur in the breeze ;
Turn to this honey-dropping well, and hear
My lonely pipes that bring thee dreamful ease.

XXXVII

TO A BLACKBIRD

Marcus Argentarius

O BLACKBIRD, leave the oak nor warble there,
Singing aloft upon its topmost spray ;
The oak 's thine enemy ; betake thee where
The shadowed vine shoots through the olives gray.

There rest thy foot, and there sing lustily,
Piping shrill music through thy tuneful mouth ;
The oak bears poisonous mistletoe, but she
The grape ; and Bacchus cools the singer's drouth.

XXXVIII
TO THE WATER NYMPHS

Hermocreon

FAREWELL, ye water nymphs, these presents meet
For the clear spring he found Hermocreon leaves;
Winnow this watery shrine with your fair feet,
While, of your gift, fresh draughts the fount receives.

XXXIX
LIGHTNING AND SNOW

Diotimus

UNHERDED troop the kine at eventide
Home from the hill, their coats all white with snow;
Alas, the herdsman by the oak-tree's side
Sleeps the long sleep, by fire from heaven laid low.

XL
THE OLD OX

Addaens

THE labouring ox, yoke-worn and bowed with age,
His master sold not for a butcher's fee,
In gratitude; now in rich pasturage
He lows rejoicing, from the plough set free.

XLVI

SAILING WEATHER

Leonidas of Tarentum

'Tis sailing weather now; the swallows come
Twittering, and from the West soft blows the breeze;
The meadows blossom, and the ocean's dumb
That roared so loud of late in combing seas.

Then weigh the anchor, and cast off from land,
Ye mariners, and sail with canvas spread;
Thus I, Priapus of the Quay, command,
That so your trafficking be fairly sped.

XLVII

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Author Unknown

No longer need the night-mist dreadful seem;
Sail boldly towards me, wanderer on the sea:
For such as thou I light my piercing beam,
In token of what Knowledge did for thee.

XLVIII

DAPHNIS ASLEEP

Theocritus

THOU sleepest, Daphnis, on the leaf-strewn floor,
Tired out; high on the hill the snares are set;
But, crowned with yellowing ivy, near the door
Priapus on thy quest with Pan has met;
They'll search the cave together! Rest no more!
Flee, flee, and shake thee clear of slumber's net!

XLIX

THE HARP'S LAST TUNE

Leontius

WHEN Orpheus went, haply a muse was left;
When Plato died, the harp for aye was still;
For he with tuneful soul and fingers deft
Saved echoes of old airs men's ears to thrill.

L

PAN PIPING

Arabius

SURELY it was Pan piping that we heard,
So did the sculptor make the marble breathe;
But Echo dashed his hopes, that tireless bird,
And vain it seemed stone pipes with sound to wreath.

LI
WONDERS OF ART

I
THE SLEEPING ARIADNE

Author Unknown

TOUCH not this marble Ariadne's breast,
For fear she start, and fly on Theseus' quest.

2
A STATUE OF NIOBE

Author Unknown

To stone the high gods changed my living form;
Praxiteles the stone with life made warm.

3
THE CNIDIAN APHRODITE

Author Unknown

Who breathed a soul in marble? Who has seen
Cypris on earth, and given desire to stone?
Surely Praxiteles; or has it been
That heaven has lost her, now to Cnidus flown?

LII
THE PORTRAIT

Erinna

How subtly drawn ! Others, O master rare,
Prometheus, as thy rivals I must greet ;
Who limned so close to life these features fair,
Adding but voice, had given the maid complete.

THE HUMAN AND DIVINE

LIII

THE SHRINE BY THE SEA

Anyte

THIS is the Cyprian's ground; she loves to keep
From land her vigil o'er the shining sea,
And speed the sailor home; around the deep
Trembles to gaze on her effulgency.

LIV

PAN OF THE SHORE

Archias

ME, Pan, aloft upon this sacred steep,
Pan of the shore the fisher-folk have set,
To guard their harbour-ways; their creels I keep,
And watch the coasting trawlers drag the net.
But, stranger, pass them by and seaward sweep;
For this a fair south wind shall pay my debt.

LV

THE HUSBANDMAN TO ZEPHYRUS

Bacchylides

FOR Zephyrus, of winds most bounteous,
 This rustic shrine Eudemus doth ordain;
 He prayed for help, and help came plenteous
 From the full ear to winnow swift the grain.

LVI

DAPHNIS TO PAN

Theocritus

THE white-skinned Daphnis, he who pipes so clear
 His pastoral hymns, to Pan these presents bore:
 Pierced reeds, his boomerang, sharp hunting-spear,
 Fawn-skin, and scrip that held his apples' store.

LVII

THE FISHERMAN TO POSEIDON

Macedonius

THE weighted net around his fishing spear,
 Ceasing his watery toil, the old man tied,
 And from his swollen eyelids fell a tear
 As to Poseidon of the brine he cried:

“Thou know'st that I am weary, blessed one,
 The prey in eld of lusty poverty,
 Feed, while he lives, a poor old man fordone—
 On land, so please thee, Lord of land and sea.”

LVIII

THE HUNTSMAN TO ARTEMIS

Mnasalcas

To thee this statue, Artemis the bright,
I raise: watch o'er this oaken covert's bounds,
Our lady, when thou scour'st its tossing height,
Leading hotfoot thy terrible, keen hounds.

LIX

THE TILLER TO DEMETER

Philippus

THESE ears of corn from his small-furrowed field
To Demeter the tiller gives in pledge;
Good harvest has he reaped; and may the yield
Another year make blunt his sickle's edge!

LX

THE WATER OF PURITY

Author Unknown

PURE-HANDED enter, in thought and speech sincere;
Not water cleanseth thee, but inner light;
A drop the good man cleanseth, but the sphere
Of ocean will not wash the sinner white.

LXI

THE PURE IN HEART

Author Unknown

WITHIN this fragrant shrine who entrance find
Must holy be; such are the pure in mind.

LXII

THE HOUSE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Macedonius

By righteousness this spacious house was built,
From the foundation to the high roof-tree,
For Macedonius won not wealth by guilt
Of rapine that with others' goods makes free.

The poor man of his wage he will not spoil,
To make him weep for labour spent in vain;
And as the just man grants surcease from toil,
So may the righteous find their works remain.

LXIII

THE NARROW WAY

Callimachus

PURE was the way that Theaetetus went,
That led not, Bacchus, to thine ivy-crown:
Brief fame to some a herald's voice has lent,
Hellas for one so wise reserves renown.

LXIV
THE SLAVE'S CONQUEST

Bianor

THIS lowly man, a slave, whom men despise,
Is loved, and holds another's soul his prize.

LXV
WEDDING EVE AND BRIDAL NIGHT

I
TIMARETA'S WEDDING EVE

Author Unknown

HER dolls and dolls' attire, her pretty ball,
Her tambourines, the net her tressess round,
The maiden gives or ere her marriage fall
To Artemis the maid, in duty bound.
O Leto's daughter, hear the maiden's call,
With thy pure touch her purity keep sound.

2
THE DEAD BRIDE

Meleager

DEATH was her bridegroom on the bridal night
When Clearista loosed her maiden zone.
At eve the guests knocked at her portals bright,
Upon the threshold breathed the flute's soft tone.
At dawn the voice of wailing! Then was stilled
The bridal song, and changed to wild lament,
And the same brands whose blaze her chamber filled
Lit for her, dead, the downward way she went.

LXVI
THE LOVE LETTER

Rufinus

My sweetest Elpis, this to wish thee well,
If well thou can'st be, Rufinus away;
I cannot, by thine eyes the truth I tell,
Absent from thee, widowed and lonely stay.

I gaze across the harbour, or haunt the fane
Of Artemis, while tears my cheeks bedew;
To-morrow, homeward bound, I'll fly again
To greet thine eyes. A thousand times adieu!

LXVII
A FATHER'S PRAYER

Euphorion

WHEN first he shore his lovely fleece of hair,
My boy to Phoebus gave his childhood's pride;
As he grows up, great Archer of the Air,
Grant that the poet's bays his temples hide.

LXVIII

A WIFE'S FAREWELL

Joannes Barbucallus

As my last thread was spun on him I gazed,
My man; and death and marriage I called divine,
Since death spared him, a husband to be praised.
For their sakes may he live, his babes and mine!

LXIX

MOTHER AND SON

Leonidas of Tarentum

Woe's Anticles! Woe's me, who on the pyre
Have laid in flower of youth my only son!
Dead at eighteen, my child! In sad attire
I wail an orphaned age till life be done.

Fain would I go to shades of underground,
Nor dawn delights me now, nor swift sunshine;
O Anticles, my sorrowing heart make sound,
And take, ill-fated one, my life with thine.

LXX

MYCENAE

Alpheus

OF sites for heroes famed few meet the eye,
And those we see nigh level now are rolled:
Such seemed—O hapless one!—as I passed by
Mycenae, barer than the open wold
That goatherds scorn; yet said one quaveringly:
“Here stood the Cyclops’ city, rich in gold.”

LXXI

A CHEERFUL OUTLOOK

Julianus Aegyptius

PLEASANT all ways of life! Good company
Business affords, and griefs lie hid at home;
There ’s pleasure in the fields, wealth on the sea,
And he gains knowledge who abroad doth roam.

Marriage is union, singleness is ease;
A child ’s a shield, no fears the childless fret;
Valiant is youth, gray hairs doth wisdom please;
Therefore take courage, live, and sons beget.

LXXII
THE CUP I LOVE

Zonas

GIVE me the cup I love, compact of earth,
For she receives me dead who gave me birth.

LXXIII
ALL IS VANITY

Glycon

LAUGHTER and tears make all, yea, all is nought,
For all that is is of unreason wrought.

LXXIV
TIME CHANGES ALL

Plato

TIME on his back bears all; and length of days
Can change name, nature, shape, and fortune's ways.

THE COMIC MUSE

LXXV

ON APHRODITE ARMED

Author Unknown

SEEING the Cyprian armed to take the field,
Said Pallas: "Shall we thus to judgement go?"
But, laughing soft, she said: "Need I a shield?
Unveiled I conquer, armed—how fares my foe?"

LXXVI

YOUNG LOVE AT PLAY

Meleager

STILL on his mother's lap, a child at play,
With dice at dawn Love played my life away.

LXXVII

THE SLEEPING SHEPHERD

Myrinus

THYRSIS, the reveller, shepherd of the sheep,
The nymphs' fair flock, Thyrsis who pipes like Pan,
Had drunk at noon, sought shade, and fallen asleep;
But, crook in hand, Love played the guardian.

LXXVIII

BOOKS OR LOVE?

Marcus Argentarius

ONCE fingering Hesiod idly I espied,
Quite of a sudden, Pyrrha drawing near;
I flung the book to earth, and thus I cried:
Why bring your works, O doting Hesiod, here?

LXXIX

THE POOR SCHOLAR

Ariston

O MICE, seek bread in other cupboards, please,
Poor is our cottage, and but small our store;
There may you find dry raisins and rich cheese,
And make a dainty feast of scraps galore.
But gnaw my books again, my patience tease.
Your graceless rioting you'll soon deplore.

LXXX

THE MISER AND THE MOUSE

Lucilius

A MISER saw a mouse run through his house,
“Good mouse,” he gasped, “what do you want with me?”
“Fear not, my friend,” said, smiling sweet, the mouse,
“Not board, mere lodging’s all we ask of thee.”

LXXXI
ODD MAN

Lucian

WHERE all were drunk one man would sober be;
But soon, it seemed, the one drunk man was he.

LXXXII
SCANDAL

Lucilius

SOME say, Nicylla, that your hair you dye;
The black must be the best that gold can buy.

LXXXIII
A CILICIAN

Demodocus

CILICIANS all are rogues, but one good man,
Cinyras, have they—a Cilician.

LXXXIV

A FLOURISHING SCHOOL

Author Unknown

HAIL, class of seven that Aristides found,
Namely, three benches and the four walls round.

LXXXV

THE SYMPATHETIC SURGEON

Nicarchus

THE surgeon killed his patient with the knife;
“Poor man,” he said, “he’d have been lame for life.

LXXXVI

SIMON THE OCULIST

Nicarchus

IF enemy thou hast, for vengeance go
Neither to Isis, nor Harpocrates,
Nor god that strikes men blind: let Simon show
What he can do, what God, if either please.

LXXXVII
THE DREAM DOCTOR

Lucilius

ASLEEP the patient saw his doctor plain;
Though charm he wore, he never woke again.

LIFE AND DEATH

LXXXVIII

BEFORE AND AFTER

I

Leonidas of Tarentum

INFINITY reached back before thy day ;
Beyond the grave is still infinity ;
What share of life is left thee? Shall I say
A pinprick, less than pinprick could that be?
So brief, so painful life! Come as it may
Ne'er sweet, but worse than death the enemy.

2

Author Unknown

WE flourish now as others did of old,
And others will, whom we shall ne'er behold.

LXXXIX

THE GAME OF LIFE

Palladis

OUR life 's a stage, a pastime; learn to play
Gaily the game, or, suffering, steadfast stay.

XC

THE HEALING DRUG

Author Unknown

How born? Whence am I? Wherefore here? To die!

What is there, nothing knowing, I can learn?

Nothing my past, no more 's futurity;

Nothing are men, and nothing can they earn.

Come then, and let me drain the grape-juice dry,

For there's the drug edge of all ills to turn.

XCI

THE SUM OF ALL

Author Unknown

I WAS not, was; was, am not. Such are we!

Who says aught else, he lies. I shall not be.

XCII

CUI BONO?

Palladas

NAKED on earth I came, naked I go;

Seeing the naked end, why toil I so?

XCIII

DEATH THE BUTCHER

Palladas

WATCHED like a herd of swine and fed are we,
All for death's maw, then butchered wantonly.

XCIV

FIVE FEET OF EARTH

Marcus Argentarius

FIVE feet of earth, when thou art dead, are thine,
Nor wilt thou feel earth's joys or the warm sun.
Then gaily drink the cup of unmixed wine,
And fling thine arms round her thy wedded one.
The mind's immortal, so the wise opine,
Who sink to Hades when their course is run.

XCV

KEEP YOUNG, DEAR SOUL

Mimnermus

KEEP young, dear soul; others will come to birth
When I am dead, a handful of black earth.

XCVI

BETTER DEAD

Theognis

FOR mortal men not to be born were best,
Never to see on earth the bright sun-god ;
But, being born, Death's portal be thy quest,
And lie betimes under the mounded sod.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

XCVII

IMMORTALITY

Ptolemaeus

I KNOW that life is brief, and I must die;
Yet when a myriad circling stars I view,
I spurn the ground to sit by Zeus on high,
And eat, with gods, ambrosia as my due.

XCVIII

THE GOOD MAN'S DEATH

Callimachus

AT rest the son of Dicon, Saon, lies
In holy sleep: say not the good man dies.

XCIX

DEATH THE LIBERATOR

Damascius

SLAVE but in body, so lived Sosime,
Who now her body, like her soul, finds free.

C

LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Theætetus

THE joy of men, the Muses' joy more dear,
 Not far did Crantor on life's journey fare;
 Earth, hast thou claspt in death him we revere,
 Or lives he with thee yet in gladness there?

CI

LOVE SACRED AND PROFANE

Marianus

"Where is thy back-bent bow, those shafts of thine
 That quiver in mid-heart, so surely sped?
 Thy wings? Pain-dealing torch? And wherefore twine
 Thy hands three wreaths, a fourth upon thy head?"
 Stranger, no common Cyprian's child you see,
 One born of earth, offspring of sensual joy;
 In human minds I light, if pure they be,
 Learning's bright torch, and souls to heaven convoy.
 Of the four virtues wreathed, in hand I bear
 These three, the first, Wisdom, as crown I wear.

EPILOGUE

CII

FAVETE LINGUIS!

Palladas

THE grave is near, waste not in talk thy breath;
Keep silence, man, and living think on death.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- Addaeus (*c.* 296 B.C.), XL.
Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.), XIX, XXX.
Agathias (*c.* A.D. 536-582), V.
Alpheus (*c.* A.D. 150), LXX.
Anacreon (563-478 B.C.), XXI.
Antipater (*c.* 100 B.C.), XLIII.
Anyte (*c.* 300 B.C.), LIII.
Arabius (*c.* A.D. 550), L.
Archias (*c.* 125 B.C.), LIV.
Aristodicus (*c.* 200 B.C.), XLII.
Ariston (*c.* 180 B.C.), LXXIX.
Asclepiades (*c.* 290 B.C.), II, VIII.

Bacchylides (*c.* 470 B.C.), LV.
Bianor (*c.* A.D. 17), LXIV.

Callimachus (*c.* 260 B.C.), LXIII, XCVI I.

Damascius (*c.* A.D. 550), XCIX.
Demodocus (*c.* 400 B.C.), LXXXIII.
Diotimus (*c.* 270 B.C.), XXXIX.

Erinna (*c.* 600 B.C.), LII.
Euphorion (*c.* 250 B.C.), LXVII.

Glaucus (*c.* A.D. 150), XXII (1).
Glycon (*c.* A.D. 375), LXXIII.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

Hermocreon (*c.* 180 B.C.), XXXVIII.

Ioannes Barbucallus (*c.* A.D. 551), LXVIII.

Iulianus Aegyptius (*c.* A.D. 532), LXXI.

Leonidas of Tarentum (*c.* 270 B.C.), XXVI, XLVI, LXIX, LXXXVIII (1).

Leontius (*c.* A.D. 550), XLIX.

Lucian (*c.* A.D. 129-200), LXXXI.

Lucilius (*c.* A.D. 50), LXXX, LXXXII, LXXXVII.

Macedonius (*c.* A.D. 550), LVII, LXII.

Marcus Argentarius (*c.* A.D. 50), XXXVII, LXXXVIII, XCIV.

Marianus (*c.* A.D. 500), CI.

Meleager (*c.* 100 B.C.), III, IV, VI, VII, XIV, XLIV, LXV (2), LXXXVI.

Mimnermus (634-600 B.C.), XCV.

Mnasalcas (*c.* 270 B.C.), XX, LVIII.

Myrinus (*c.* A.D. 50), LXXVII.

Nicaenetus (*c.* 250 B.C.), XLV.

Nicarchus (*c.* A.D. 50), LXXXV, LXXXVI.

Nicias (*c.* 280 B.C.), XXVII.

Nossis (*c.* 270 B.C.), I.

Palladas (*c.* A.D. 375), LXXXIX, XCII, XCIII, CII.

Paulus Silentarius (*c.* A.D. 550), IX, XI.

Philippus (*c.* A.D. 50), LIX.

Plato (429-347 B.C.), XIII, XXXIII, XXXV, LXXIV.

Ptolemaeus (*c.* A.D. 150), XCVII.

Rufinus (*c.* A.D. 550), X, LXVI.

Simmias (*c.* 310 B.C.), XXXI, XLI.

Simonides (556-467 B.C.), XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XXVIII.

Strato (*c.* A.D. 125), XII.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

Theaetetus (*c.* 300 B.C.), C.

Theocritus (*c.* 280 B.C.), XLVIII, LVI.

Theognis (548 B.C.), XCVI.

Thucydides (471-401 B.C.), XXXII.

Tymnes (*c.* 180 B.C.), XXIX.

Zonas (*c.* 88 B.C.), LXXII.

Author Unknown, XXII (2), XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXXIV, XXXVI,
XLVII, LI (1), (2), (3), LX, LXI, LXV (1), LXXV, LXXXIV,
LXXXVIII (2), XC, XCI.



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